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Issue 7

September, October & November 2012

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'The Wisdom Age'

Newsletter of Drogmi Buddhist Institute

A Tibetan Buddhist Centre in the Sakya Tradition

ANNUAL SHAMATHA RETREAT

Rejuvenation

28 September to 6 October 2012

"Parting From the Four Attachments"

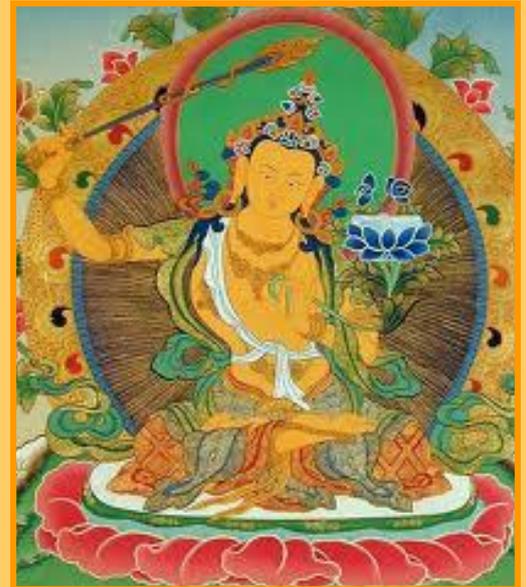
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"If you have attachment to this life, you are not a Dharma person.

If you have attachment to cyclical existence, you do not have renunciation.

If you have attachment to your own purpose, you do not have bodhicitta, the thought of enlightenment.

If grasping arises, you do not have the view".



This classic Tibetan Buddhist teaching was uttered by the *Lord Manjushri*, the Buddha of Wisdom to a young twelve year old scholar *Sachen Kunga Nyingpo* in the 12th century. Reflecting on the meaning of this four line statement *Sachen Kunga Nyinpo* realised that this mind training of **"Parting From the Four Attachments"** incorporates all the practices of the path of the transcendent perfections and he felt an extraordinary confidence in all the teachings of the Dharma. These truly are inspiring teachings that are helpful to everyone.

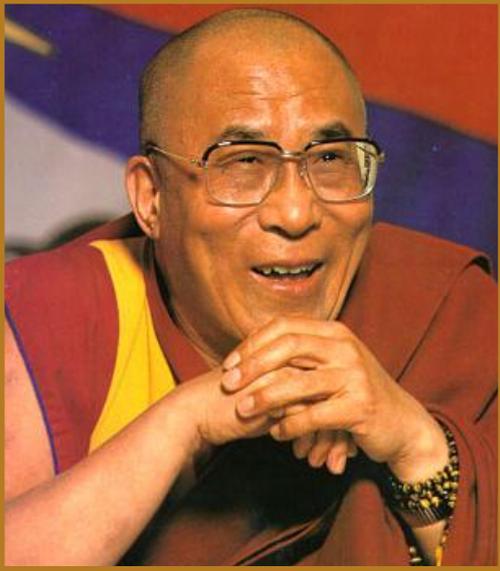
Khenpo Ngawang Dhamchoe will incorporate these most precious teachings into an eight day Shamatha Retreat (Calm Abiding Meditation). During this retreat Khenpo-la will give detailed instructions on Shamatha teachings that we can envelop and apply into our daily life and our spiritual practice. We think things in our everyday life are important, and for this reason we find it hard to spare time for activities that are of great ongoing benefit to ourselves, such as learning the Buddha's teachings. Many of us are a bit stuck in our lives or in our spiritual practice, we want to progress but don't have the time or knowledge of how to do it. Shamatha meditation technique can help achieve peace and happiness in our lives. Simply developing a regular meditation discipline, even if it is only ten minutes a day, can change your life.

"Living in a spiritual way of life is the best way not to waste this precious human life and to accumulate and create more merit and wisdom. Every great master gives heartfelt advice to their students, whenever you can manage the time, go on retreat. During the retreat it is the best

opportunity to learn the precious Dharma and put it into real practice. Also it allows us basic things such as to clear out our busy mind, which causes us to inflict so many distractions on ourselves. This way it gives us the opportunity to refresh ourselves. When we live in such a busy life it is very hard to find time to do a retreat for months or years. Doing an eight to ten day retreat will give you a solid foundation and reintroduce you to the nature of your mind. So while we have this precious human rebirth it is good to give yourself something that is valuable in this life and the future. Otherwise we are just caught up in a samsaric way of life. We are going to waste again this precious opportunity." Khenpo-la



His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama's Birthday celebration



His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama's Birthday celebration at Petersham

On Saturday 7 July the Petersham Town Hall in Sydney's inner west was transformed into a Tibetan house of celebration for His Holiness the Dalai Lama's 77th birthday.

The stage became a Gompa and the hall a Tibetan meeting place. The sounds and smells of Tibet wafted down the street of Petersham, whilst inside the hall Tibetans and their fellow Sydneysiders relaxed in the joyous atmosphere.

For a westerner, and bereft of some culture, it is an absolute joy to feel absorbed by the Tibetan people. How happy they are, how wonderfully warm they are. His Holiness the Dalai Lama is very much loved by all Tibetans. He seems to be able to hold them together, to remind them of their great spiritual development and their incredibly beautiful cultural practices. How fitting to have a wonderful cultural display in His honour. His Holiness is renowned as being a great supporter of the preservation of Tibetan culture.

"The Conservancy for Tibetan Art and Culture is working to create a better understanding of the peoples, cultures, and traditions of Tibet, as well as the threat that confronts them. Humanity would be poorer should it be lost." - His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyaltso.

Then, Khenpo-la had the great honour of cutting His Holiness' birthday cake. In a great display of sharing with others, we all got to have a slice and it was delicious. A big thank you to the members of DBI who spent the celebration day at our DBI Dharma stall.

Happy Birthday to His Holiness...



Turning the Wheel of Dharma for the first time marked this year in the English calendar 23 July 2012, the Buddha taught 2,500 years ago The Four Noble Truths at Saranath.

Students gathered at Drogmi Buddhist Institute for light offerings and practice on the Wheel of Dharma Day and to celebrate the birth of Shakyamuni Buddha. Over the holy month of Vesak this year, 1,500 candles were lit on behalf of members/family and friends to mark this most auspicious occasion.



"Light Offering Prayer"



Firstly, the butter lamp base is made of many precious jewels. Inside it is as vast as the three thousand realms, filled with butter of the most exquisite quality. Place the wick in the middle of the butter as large as Mount Sumeru. The flame of this butter lamp is the nature of the five wisdoms.

The flame of this is as bright as a billion Suns. A powerful light radiates from this lamp that pervades space in all the ten directions. Through this immeasurable light, unsurpassable objects of offering arise like vast cloud banks, which are offered until Samsara ends.

Through this, *May all beings and myself, whether they are living or have passed on, purify the two obscurations and accomplish the two accumulations (merit and wisdom).*

May we swiftly attain the highest enlightenment, Buddhahood...





After an inspiring Shamatha practice, Khenpo-la and members settled down to a sumptuous luncheon in honour of welcoming Lama Kalsang to Australia and to the sangha at Drogmi Buddhist Institute.

There was a balance of the right dose of formal and informal ceremonies as Lama Kalsang was presented with a range of vital Aussie accessories which included a supply of vegemite and a blow up "cricket bat" that looked awfully like a baseball bat. Lama expressed his happiness in being here with us all in his new role as assistant to Khenpo-la and thanked everyone very much for the warm welcome offered to him. It would be hard to find bigger smiles than those found on both Khenpo-la and Lama Kalsang that day, in fact some have observed Khenpo-la has not stopped smiling since the arrival of Lama. It was a really relaxed and joyous event and a very big welcome to Australia Lama Kalsang...



Momo Workshop fundraiser with Lama Kalsang

At the momo workshop I learnt how to make momos. The momos were

big and juicy, just how I like them. Lama Kalsang made yummy momos and they were the best momos ever, it was the best day of the year :) !!!!! He taught in a step by step way that was easy to follow. **Joshua (10 years old)**



News from the Committee Corner *It has been a great three months at Drogmi Buddhist Institute...*

Khenpo-la continues his busy teaching programme in Sydney, around Australia and New Zealand. Term three of the Shedra Programme is underway in Sydney, Lawson and Richmond. Khenpo and senior members lead meditation practices every Tuesday and Sunday.

We have the wonderful news that Lama Kalsang arrived in Australia in July to take up his position at DBI as assistant Lama to Khenpo. Lama Kalsang underwent his monastic training at Drikung Kagyu Monastery in Dera Dhun, India and then undertook Buddhist Philosophy study at the renowned Dzongsar Institute in Bir, India. His main interests are the shrine and ritual practices. Lama was in the country only hours when Khenpo and he performed a purification practice at the Centre on Universal Prayer Day. Lama is also a good cook, and ran a very successful momo workshop at the Centre on 11 August. We hope he has an enjoyable stay and members can learn from his great skills.

A big thank you to those volunteers who help make Khenpo's busy teaching programme run smoothly, including those who coordinate the Shedra classes, cook meals, lead practices, drive Khenpo to and from the airport... the list goes on. And to all those Centre's and groups who host Khenpo in their various locations around Australia and New Zealand, you are doing a great job in helping spread the precious Dharma. We encourage people to renew or take up Centre membership, or take up the opportunity to sponsor various aspects of the Centre's running. This has enormous benefit to the Centre, but most importantly to ourselves, creating great merit.

DBI is extremely fortunate to have a teacher with the qualities of Khenpo-la, and the committee encourages everyone to participate in the Centre's activities. We suggest you take this amazing opportunity to really learn the Dharma from Him. Attending a teaching once a year, such as at the Shamatha Retreat, or meditation practice when you have time, can be of such great benefit to you and in turn others.

The Centre is for everyone, so you are welcome to take part and engage in any of the Centre's activities. Please let us know your ideas and suggestions. One way to do this is through the Centre Facebook page **www.facebook.com/DrogmiBuddhistInstitute** where you can be kept up to date with Khenpo and the Centre's Dharma activities, and also post your own comments and thoughts as well.

We look forward to seeing you soon. *Thank you, the DBI committee.*

October Annual Shamatha Retreat 2012

"Parting From the Four Attachments"

When: 28 September (Friday) 7pm - 6 October (Saturday) 1pm

Where: Ararat Lodge / Upper Colo Road Upper Colo

Cost: Full Retreat: Dormitory \$840 / camping \$750

Full Retreat: Early bird, member or concession \$750

Daily: \$120 per day

Early bird payments in full by 24 September

The cost of the Annual Shamatha Retreat includes accommodation, all meals, refreshments and teachings.

Bookings: Essential to book either on line or phone

www.drogmi.org or (02) 8005 1757

Shamatha Meditation / Calm Abiding Meditation technique has been used for centuries since the Buddha taught it over 2,500 years ago. Every Yogi's inner realisation and peace, and outer health and happiness, is developed from this foundation. In modern life we are emotionally distressed and physically unwell due to stress. The best remedy to reduce this stress is Calm Abiding Meditation. This retreat will be in a remote and naturally beautiful environment under the instructions of a Master who has been practicing these techniques for forty years, and with the enthusiasm of Spiritual Friends. Giving yourself these eight days can be a life changing experience, and the most precious gift that you can receive.

It is extremely rare to find such sanctuary in our busy lives and we encourage you not to miss this opportunity. **Bookings essential!**

NATIONAL TEACHING DATES AND CONTACTS

Melbourne Victoria, Sakya Choebar Lhunpo / Dorethy

31 August - 2 September

contact: 0423 363 183

Dubbo New South Wales / Suzi

14 - 16 September

contact: (02) 4757 3328

Gympie Queensland, Dharmachakra Gompa, / Rob & Sandra

2 - 4 October and 14 - 16 December

contact: (07) 5484 9152 / 0427 540 694

Alice Springs Northern Territory / Zara

11 - 15 October

contact: 0439 035 639

Bermagui New South Wales, Samadhi Buddhist Centre /

Alan & Annie

26 - 28 October

contact: (02) 6493 4971

Cairns Queensland, Khacho Yulo Ling Buddhist Centre / Ani Rinchen

9 - 11 November

contact: (07) 4041 5556 www.yuloling.com

Rockhampton Queensland, Ananda Buddhist Centre / Dan

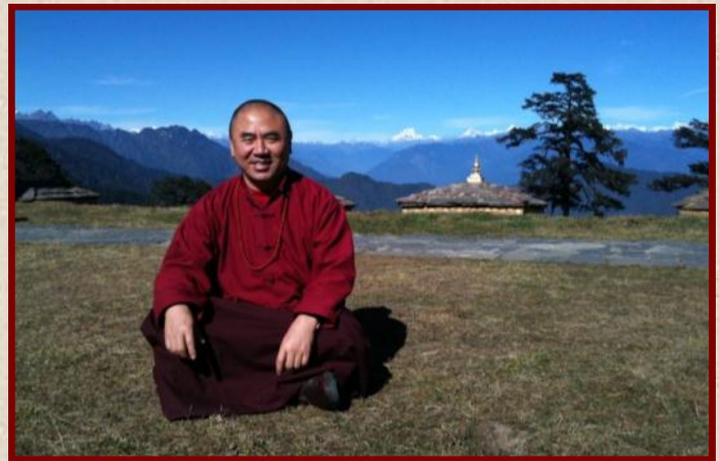
16 - 18 November

contact: 0409 631 124

Rongton Brisbane, Queensland / Venerable Lekshe Tsultim

21 - 23 November

contact: (07) 3352 4730



If you are finding it difficult to pay for the retreat, or any other Teaching offered by Drogmi Buddhist Institute, please know that you can contact the Centre at

info@drogmi.org

at any time to discuss payment options appropriate to your circumstances.

It is our wish to assist you with your study of the Dharma when or whenever possible.

**Loving Kindness & Compassion Retreat
experience shared from June 2012**

It's hard to say anything about the Loving Kindness and Compassion Retreat without a short preamble. I came to Drogmi with a very secular, scientific and frankly atheistic view of the world, whatever merits and capacity for beauty, science concludes it's the nature of life that it runs on



suffering. Finding some equanimity in the face of that awful truth is an important goal, and Khenpo's wisdom in that regard; the refinement of both a millennia of life in the high, dry valleys of Tibet and the grand ethical framework of Buddhism is absolutely and completely authentic.

Khenpo-la brings intellect, subtlety and refinement to his teaching. His compassion and kindness is leavened by humour and backed by a calm reserve that certifies the soundness of his own method.

This retreat covered all aspects of the cultivation of loving kindness and compassion and I find my notes most useful. Any opportunity taken to listen to Khenpo and to practice is time well spent and I found my own skeptical rationality no barrier to appreciating the value of Buddhism in general and the Sakya tradition in particular.

As a transgendered woman I would also add that my Dharma brothers and sisters have proved both welcoming and warm and fine exemplars. My own practice helps set a course to an effective equanimity and modes of self improvement that have been tested by time.

It was a privilege to participate in this retreat and I look forward to others.

Kari



In the Tibetan Buddhist Calendar:

7 September: His Holiness the 41st Sakya Trizins' birthday according to the Western calendar.

28 October: Anniversary of *Bari Lotsawa, Khon Konchok Gyalpo, Sachen Kunga Nyingpo & Gonpo Sonam Chokden.*

Birthday of His Eminence *Luding Khenchen Rinpoche.*

1 November: Anniversary of *Atisha.*

6 November: *Lha Bab Duchon*

Buddha Shakyamuni's descent from heaven realms. On this day the effects of positive or negative actions are multiplied ten million times.

Interview with Ani Rinchen at the Khacho Yulo Ling Buddhist Centre, Cairns Queensland

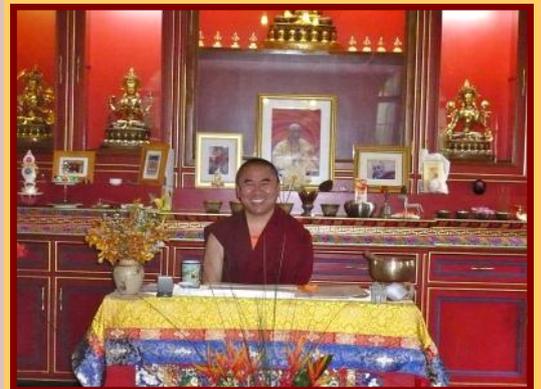
Can you share with us how you first came to the Dharma?

My first encounter with the Dharma was during a fairly traumatic period in my life when I was on the run with a friend of mine from our ex husbands. We had five children between us and a friend took us to the Chenrezig Institute as "refugees", which was quite funny at the time, although not having much knowledge of the Dharma at the time I didn't get it! This was in the early 80's and it was quite an experience. I can remember being woken up on the first morning to the sound of the gong and being inexplicably pulled out of my bed by the overwhelming urge to follow the sound to the Temple. I had many weird and wonderful dreams whilst I was there, it all seemed so familiar. I did an introductory course in Buddhism, however it wasn't my time to stay and we left after two months to try and find some stability in the "normal" world. It was almost 17 years later when I met the teachings again and this time it was the right time and I fully immersed myself in them. I had been on a spiritual quest my whole life and no other religion or philosophy answered my questions quite like the Dharma. I remember hearing the words "All suffering comes from selfishness, all happiness comes from giving" and my whole perspective took a 180 degree turn and changed my life completely. I no longer had the song running in my head, "But what about me?" there was a shift to look at the world from another perspective and quite frankly it was a relief. I am so grateful to all the amazing teachers that I have met over the years, yet my heart belongs to His Eminence Chogye Trichen Rinpoche who guides me still in everything I do.

What was the deciding factor in becoming ordained as a Tibetan Buddhist nun?

It was during a ten day retreat where I got pneumonia, and while I was delirious, one of the women in my room asked if I had ever thought about becoming a nun? I looked at her as if she had six heads and said are you kidding? But later at home, when the fever lifted, the question was still there and the more I explored it the more it seemed to make sense. I was going to Nepal in February to meet His Eminence Chogye Trichen Rinpoche. I had had several powerful dreams about this incredible Teacher and I just knew that no matter what it took I had to meet him. I spoke with Lama Choedak about this and how I could get to meet His Eminence and he said he was going to see him on a visit to Nepal in February 2000, if I wanted to go with him I could. I think I was so stunned that I forgot to answer him but quickly said yes. So then a few months later when the whole nun thing came up, well I was already going

to Nepal so it made even more sense. I asked about becoming ordained with His Eminence, and there didn't seem to be any problems, especially as my family had grown up and left home. I just knew that this was what I was meant to do with the last part of my life and although I was extremely nervous I was also excited. I was ordained by His Eminence Chogye Trichen Rinpoche in his little private room which had a view of the Buddha eyes of the Bodhinath Stupa out one window and the head of the magnificent Maitreya Statue through the glass windows to the shrine room of the Monastery. The ordination took place on 3 March 2001. This was an incredibly big life transformation and I haven't looked back. His Eminence gave me the blessings to start a small centre in Cairns and gave the name *Khacho Yulo Ling* in a private audience when he was in Australia later that same year. *Khacho Yulo Ling* started out in a lovely A-frame house out at the northern beaches of Cairns. I rented and worked from this house. We now have a beautiful old Church that has been transformed into a Gompa and although we still owe a lot of money on it, we are flourishing in many ways. This I put down to the blessings of HE Chogye Trichen Rinpoche, he blessed this Centre with his presence in 2006 and ours was the last Centre to be blessed before he left Australia. He passed into *Parinirvana* the following January so we were truly fortunate. It was also the same year that I started working in the area of palliative care as a volunteer and this is definitely the area of work that I am passionate about. I work quite a bit in the community helping families come to terms with death and dying and also doing prayers and funerals for those who have died. **Continued on page 6...**





Meditational Experiences in Body and Mind Workshop with Tony Richardson well received...



It was a rich and uplifting workshop Meditational Experiences in Body - Mind with Dr. Tony Richardson, a renowned Somatic Psychiatrist and Tibetan Buddhist practitioner.

The warm shrine room housed 23 keen participants, one being none other than Khenpo-la. It was very inspiring to see Khenpo keen and eager to learn the western way of thinking from such a skilled and kind instructor such as Tony.

Joy was the catch word for the weekend, and we all learnt a bit more about how to truly experience it.

We thank Dr. Tony for contributing his time and knowledge to run this fundraising event. It was a wonderfully successful weekend on so many levels, and we would also like to extend our gratitude to all those who participated and supported the Centre.

Interview with Ani Rinchen continued ...

How did you first meet Khenpo-la?

I first met Khenpo-la in Cairns at Bodhicitta Buddhist Centre and since then I have met him at many teachings and events, one of the most significant was the 2009 visit to Australia of His Holiness Sakya Trizin which Khenpo-la organized. This visit of course also included a trip to Cairns which was a significant event for our Centre.

Khenpo-la is a regular teacher at our Centre and we are so grateful that he is able to come to Cairns at least twice a year, we love his visits. His teachings are insightful and very meaningful, we have learnt so much from him and hoe to continue to have him guide us in the Dharma.

A few years back you wrote a beautiful Dharma song about practicing Loving Kindness towards all beings even towards mosquitos for the Buddhist scripture children. What stands out for you the most whilst teaching Buddhism for children?

Children have such a refreshing take on things, they really are a delight to be around and to share the Dharma with. We have children's group once a month on a Saturday morning and we have a wonderful time. We start with prostrations and our simplified prayers, then a short meditation followed by walking meditation whilst we chant *Om Mani Padme Hum*, which we then dedicate for anyone who may be sick or has died. This often includes pets, and on one occasion we had a beautiful sunbird die in the Gompa during session. This led to lots of mantra's followed by a funeral and burial in the garden.

What vision do you have for Khacho Yulo Ling Buddhist Centre?

The vision for the Centre has always been that the practitioners and the practices continue to flourish for the benefit of the community, the environment and all sentient beings. Our Centre hosts a wide variety of practices, we have an ever growing children's group, several other Buddhist groups use our space and we are visited by at least seven local state and Catholic schools each year. I work in the community as a Palliative Care sector and I also teach meditation and relaxation as part of the Cardiac Rehabilitation program and am often called up to give talks to community and health organizations. We have a fairly high profile in the community, and this was demonstrated recently when we hosted the Maitreya Project Holy Shrine Relic Tour, having over 1,300 people coming through the Centre over the weekend and more than 200 people attended the Interfaith Opening Ceremony, including the Mayor and all the major religious leaders. Many people were moved to tears by the sheer presence of these holy relics. We hope to keep the Dharma alive in Cairns, ultimately we would love to have a retreat Centre in the area as well so that people would be able to do short and long term retreats.



All attending Meditational Experiences in Body and Mind Workshop

"Ease in Life: how release in the body can release mind tension " Upcoming workshop and fundraiser...

Magda Georges has worked over the past 24 years as a Somatic Psychotherapist, PTSD Therapist and Ease in Life Teacher. She has studied with Dr. Tony Richardson for much of this time as well as other teachers, to learn different healing modalities. In this two hour session, Magda will show us that we can find ease by working with the body directly to release tensions. This can enable us to ride the waves of life regardless of whatever is happening around us.

Discover how ease in the body can lead to ease in being in the world, through simple movements within a supportive environment. **Page 10 for details.**

Shedra Programme Terms 3 & 4

Venue	Term 3 Evenings / Dates	Times	Teaching
Richmond Community Hall	Monday nights 20 August to 24 September	7:30 - 9:00 pm	<i>The Six Perfections</i>
Lawson Mountains Community Resource Centre	Wednesday nights 22 August to 26 September	7:00 - 8:30 pm	<i>The Six Perfections</i>
Ashfield Centre	Thursday nights 16 August to 27 September	7:30 - 9:30 pm	<i>Kamilashila</i> <i>'Stages of Meditation'</i>

Venue	Term 4 Evenings / Dates	Times	Teaching
Richmond Community Hall	Monday nights 15 October to 26 November	7:30 - 9:00 pm	TBA
Lawson Mountains Community Resource Centre	Wednesday nights 17 October to 28 November	7:00 - 8:30 pm	TBA
Ashfield Centre	Thursday nights 18 October to 29 November	7:30 - 9:30 pm	<i>Kamilashila</i> <i>'Stages of Meditation'</i>



The Six Perfections

The Six Perfections or '*Paramitas*' are the very essence of our true nature. However, since these qualities of the heart have become obscured by delusion, selfishness, and other karmic tendencies, we must develop these potential qualities and bring them into expression. The *Paramitas* are the six kinds of virtuous practice required for skilfully freeing us from the problems we face in our daily life. They help us to create a perfect life. Each week during Term 3 Khenpo will incorporate one of the perfections within his detailed explanations of Meditation Practices.

- ◆ 1st week: *Perfection of generosity.*
- ◆ 2nd week: *Perfection of ethics.*
- ◆ 3rd week: *Perfection of patience.*
- ◆ 4th week: *Perfection of joyful effort.*
- ◆ 5th week: *Perfection of contemplation/meditation.*
- ◆ 6th week: *Perfection of wisdom.*

Please note it is not necessary to have completed Terms 1 and 2 of this years study to undertake study in Term 3. You are welcome to attend as a casual. If you have any questions please contact Ann Kelly either at: (02) 8005 - 1757 or email: info@drogmi.org

End of year presentations & DBI BBQ 9 December 2012

A reminder for members, students, friends and family of Drogmi Buddhist Institute to put in your dairies and calendars the **9th December 2012!** Starting with a *Long Life Ceremony* for Khenpo-la including end of year presentations and Christmas Break BBQ! For those who have been studying in the Shedra Programme in Sydney, Richmond, Lawson and via recordings, you are



invited to share what you have learnt this year with others in a short presentation (5-10 minute duration). Others who have been to Khenpo's workshops, retreats, or guided meditation sessions are also invited to give a presentation of what they have gained or learnt from their experiences in attending. For those not choosing to give a talk come along and enjoy. **To be held at the Ashfield Centre, Sunday 9 December - starting 11am till 2pm. Please come and join us, the more the merrier!!!**

Acharya Kamilashila "Stages of Meditation"

The author of '*Stages of Meditation*', Archarya Kamilashila, was a great scholar - saint of the 9th century. Stages of Meditation has now become an important resource to those of all levels of study or practice who have an interest in meditation. In this course, Khenpo-la leads the class through the instructions given in the text on how to correctly practice meditation, from the sitting posture and physical environment conducive to meditation, through techniques of calming the mind to prepare for meditation. This is one of the great "how to meditate" texts in Tibetan Buddhism and is a wonderful text to study for those beginning in meditation to the more experienced. Again, there is no pre-requisite to attend these classes, all welcome.



Khenpo-la leads this month's Sunday morning Yeshe program for children at the Manjushri Buddhist Centre, on the South Coast at Milton.



It has been a month now since receiving the teaching on the The Twelve Links of Interdependent Origination, and the lingering feeling I have from the teaching is the importance of trying to follow the Eight Fold Path. Through Khenpo's careful explanation on this topic, it became clear how our moment by moment actions of body, speech and mind are creating this samsara. He talked about the importance of cultivating a very positive mind and as always his calm and clear reasoning made everything feel clarified... Thank goodness for our teachers, they are a light in the fog!

Ben A.

*Above right photo :
Light offerings made on the eve of Saga Dawa Duechen before the days teaching of Vajrasattva and practice at Milton.*



The children of Milton were very lucky to receive a beautiful teaching from Khenpo-la on the Sunday morning.

He spoke of the importance of kindness and how this leads to true happiness and peacefulness. Khenpo taught how being kind and caring can inspire others to be kind and happy and that if you live your life this way then everyone will want to be your friend.

Khenpo-la answered questions from the children and their parents and gave the children ideas on how they could care for their parents. One of the children gave words of motivation to include all beings in our prayers of being happy, then all the children sang a song about meditation and Khenpo-la guided a beautiful meditation ended with a dedication.

Thank you to Khenpo-la, such a blessing for our children... **Ruthie**



The Buddhist Library Camperdown Sydney

At July's workshop held at the Buddhist Library Camperdown Sydney, "**Meditation for Everyone**", Khenpo talked about the things that impede or obstruct us from meditating correctly, that one of the problems is that we are mismanaging our thoughts, that we need to be good managers of our discursive thoughts to do correct meditation.

Khenpo-la said that our minds are like how teenagers use their mobile phone, comparing them to mobile phone plans. We need to choose a capped plan, otherwise, if we pay as we use we would end up bankrupt with the amount we spend on our discursive or negative thoughts.

Khenpo-la went on to discuss that if we leave our minds to have unlimited time to wander, we inevitably will get very negative. The scientist will devote their time concentrating on the science, looking at positive ways to solve problems, etc., whereas the average person's mind is not that focussed and will invariably concentrate on negative things.

Shamatha meditation is the tool that will help us to manage our thoughts and focus our mind.



Learn more about Shamatha Meditation in the annual Shamatha Retreat held 28 September to 6 October with Khenpo-la... Refer to pages 1 and 4 for more details and relevant information about this upcoming Retreat for 2012!



Attending the recent workshop with Khenpo Ngawang Dhamchoe was life changing for me. Although I've dipped my toes into a variety of meditative experiences, I've often felt I lacked commitment to the process. This time felt different from the moment I walked through the doors of the Buddhist Centre in Braddon. The room was warm with light, full of colour, gentle and welcoming. Khenpo spoke with steadiness and had a comforting voice. The talk about meditation was an introduction of sorts, although for me the areas that were touched on covered universal themes of the human condition: our feelings of needing to do, accomplish, acquire; feelings of fatigue, our 'monkey mind', sadness, loss, anger, anxiety and illness; what about the health of our planet, our loved ones, death and more loss. Many of us new to meditation had questions, which Khenpo answered with great clarity, wisdom and humility. He shared that the answers to our questions are within us all, and meditation will not only bring us answers, yet clarity too. Khenpo expressed that the same questions were presented to the Buddha 2,500 years ago and by sitting in meditation we can find our own unique path that will calm our mind and open our heart. Khenpo likened our untamed mind to that of a wild elephant, without training, patience and tenderness, the elephant is out of control and can create an environment of chaos and a path of destruction. However, by incorporating a few simple tools we can harness the energy and beauty of the elephant. He talked about placing a rope around the elephant's neck and attaching the other end of the rope to a grounded pole. Eventually, with daily practice the elephant's wildness will become tame, like our mind. Yet taming the wild mind does not just occur while sitting in meditation, the mind can be trained during our daily lives and activities... **Jill D**

It was a delight that we welcomed Khenpo-la to frosty Canberra. He spoke to about twenty five people at a public talk on Friday evening at the City Library in Canberra and gave us all a thought provoking and powerful teaching. Khenpo described how happiness and it's causes and indeed suffering, have more to do with our minds than our outer conditions and appearances in our lives. This was then explored and discussed in some detail using clear logic to analyse this perspective. **Fiona**



Dharmachakra Gompa, Gympie QLD

The weekend of teachings at the Dharmachakra Gompa was profound for me. A jaded practitioner, seeming to alternate between highly enthused to bored and unmotivated, never managing to travel the middle way.

Khenpo's teaching has cut deep into me, stabilizing and holding strong the knowledge that if I take refuge as often as possible in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha my mind will be protected. On this foundation I feel I can now build with total certainty and trust this knowledge that by my own diligence I can clear away my ignorance, and that it is possible to trust myself in this.

Khenpo's skillful teaching has helped me to see and understand that I can create the reality that is most helpful to myself and others. My life being a blank canvas upon which I can paint wherever my wandering mind takes me. If I practice the visualizations regularly, take refuge, rest in the Guru, I can then cultivate and tame my wild mind and make possible the positive qualities I yearn for. I can see how my life could be transformed little by little.

Thank you to Rob and Sandra for establishing such a beautiful place to practice and thank you to Khenpo for his remarkable teaching and his delightful presence, he was so happy to share with us. With much gratitude and heartfelt thanks, I'll be back! **Eileen**



As usual Khenpo was able to condense a three month subject into two days. It's a vast subject and we all tried to hold onto the main subjects of Sakya Ngondro practice. It is certainly a very important step as we all travel on the path to Buddhahood. **Rob A.**



**Movie Fundraiser Event!!
Milarepa**

A portrayal of the amazing life of Milarepa, one of the most widely known Tibetan saints. Having spent his younger years committing incredibly negative acts, Milarepa discovered the Buddhist path through the great master Marpa. It was with Marpa's guidance that Milarepa was able to transform his life and it was his great endurance in the face of tremendous obstacles that his legend was born. Milarepa's story of struggle, resilience and in the end triumph embodies the human spirit.

Two separate showings

When:
Saturday 15 September at 4pm

Where:
**Drogmi Buddhist Institute
37 Albert Parade Ashfield**

Cost:
Adults \$25 Children \$10

AND

When:
Friday 26 October at 7pm

Where:
**Mountains Community Resource
Centre, corner San Jose & Loftus
Streets, Lawson**

Cost:
Adults \$15 Children \$5

Payments on line for both events at
www.drogmi.org

or at the door

Refreshments included
*All proceeds go to Drogmi Buddhist
Institute*

Seminar at University of Western Sydney, Richmond

Topic: "What is Karma"?
Understanding Karma helps us realize the accountability of all our thoughts, speech and actions. This is the reality of life.

When: 20 October 2012 (Saturday)
Time: 1 - 4:30 pm
Where: The Pioneer Room, Hawkesbury Campus UWS
Cost: \$40 / \$30 Concession and Refreshments included.

Somatic workshop and fundraiser with Magda

Topic: "Ease in Life - how release in the body can release mind tension"
With facilitator Magda Georges. For more information on this subject please refer to page 6 under Dr. Tony Richardson's workshop group photo.

When: 14 October 2012 (Sunday)
Time: 1 - 3 pm
Where: DBI Centre Ashfield Sydney
Cost: \$20



**Vajrasattva & Medicine
Buddha Retreat**



During this retreat Khenpo-la will give teachings and lead guided meditation sessions on two of the most popular Tibetan Buddhist practices, Vajrasattva and Medicine Buddha Practice.

The Vajrasattva Practice is for mental and physical purification. It is the most powerful purification practice we can do in our daily life. Vajrasattva is the deity that embodies the purification powers of all the Buddhas and for this reason is a great practice to undertake into the New Year.

The Medicine Buddha Practice, the Supreme Healer, is not only a very powerful method for healing and increasing healing powers both for the self and others, but also for overcoming the inner sickness such as our negativity, attachment, ignorance etc. Thus Medicine Buddha can help to decrease our physical and mental illness and suffering.

Please note this is a day to day only retreat therefore does not include accommodation. Everyone is welcome and bookings are most essential.

If you have time this is a very positive way to see in the New Year!

Date: 30 December 2012 to 1 January 2013
Place: Drogmi Buddhist Institute 37 Albert Parade Ashfield Sydney
Cost: Full Retreat - \$180 (\$160 for financial members)
Daily attendance - \$70 per day
Daily Programme:
30th: 9:00am - 5:00pm
31st: 9:00am - 5:00pm
1st: 9:00am - 12:00pm

Bookings online or phone:
www.drogmi.org or (02) 8005 1757



Below students of Nyima Tashi Centre

Auckland New Zealand, Nyima Tashi Centre

Recently both the students and guests of Nyima Tashi Centre were delighted to be taught by the Venerable Khenpo Ngawang Dhamchoe. Khenpo-la gave pithy teachings on the skandas, or aggregates of compositional elements. This built beautifully on the instruction to the topic that Nyima Tashi Shedra students have already received from Traleg Kyabgon Rinpoche in the under 35s Shedra study group. Khenpo-la then spent the rest of the weekend carefully explaining each aspect of the Seven Point Mind Training or Lojong. Students left with both a more concise knowledge of the philosophy of mind-training, and with a clearer understanding of how we can embody these points of training in our everyday life interactions, as well as in our practice. We are most grateful for Khenpo-la's time and effort in teaching us. **Annabelle** August visit of Khenpo Ngawang Dhamchoe at the new Nymia Tashi Centre in Auckland, arrived as a blessing for many of the Shedra students. Going through the five skandas once again with a teacher of such knowledge, has expanded our understanding in order to identify our misinterpretations and individual perceptions of the reality, and how to ultimately free ourselves from the suffering we create. Khenpo-la has given us precious practical help, often through examples that have further clarified the process of causes and effects, how we relate to others and how to train our mind with the application of antidotes and reminders. We students of Traleg Kyabgon Rinpoche IX at Nymi Tashi, have found with this weekend course further motivation for our practices and studies. We look forward to welcoming Khenpo-la again. **Francesca**



Christchurch New Zealand

Through sharing with us Atisha's Seven Point Mind Training, Khenpo-la gave us a very integrated view of how the appearance of migratory existence persists, while revealing the extraordinary capability of the mind for understanding and developing the qualities of the Buddha.

With Khenpo we could foster the seed in our minds of that wish to truly release all beings from the sufferings of transience. We learned to approach this skillfully and put aside the impetus to rush.

Under Khenpo's guidance we applied nurturing kindness to our own minds and meditation processes as a vital step towards beneficially practicing 'giving and taking'. It is also wonderful to experience teachings given in just such a spirit of compassion and equanimity, as is entirely consistent with the message. **Robert**



In Christchurch we were very fortunate to receive weekend teachings given by Khenpo Ngawang Dhamchoe. Following a public talk on "How to Live Without Fear", Khenpo-la gave teachings on Chekawa Yeshe Dorje's root text on the Seven Point Mind Training. Alongside these teachings, Khenpo-la clearly underlined the importance of the three pronged

approaches of study, contemplation and meditation. Part of what I found particularly helpful was the importance of absorbing the teachings intellectually but then, crucially, applying reflection, experimentation and analysis to them so that we gradually develop realization of these teachings. Meditation moves the teachings from head to heart making them, most importantly, useful in transforming every aspect of our daily lives, helping us to develop compassion, kindness and wisdom. **Jane**



Photos above left: Khenpo-la in TV interview, Radio Interview & group photos in Christchurch.



Length of time to focus on the object...

They say quality is more important than quantity, so start with a short time, but really concentrating on the object. If you get distracted then stop, restart and refocus again. In this way you repeat more on the focus of the object. For example you don't do ten minutes as one, you might stop and start many times, but you must finish the ten minutes. This continuation is very important. From time to time you will be aware the mind is not focused on the object, and has wandered somewhere. Once you are aware the mind has wandered, you bring it back and refocus again on the object. This is called *repair placement of mind*. If you bring the mind back, but keep getting distracted, then you use some force with the mind. If you don't use any force, you make it easy, then the mind is happier to go wandering about than it is to meditate. Use a little force when you bring the mind back, and force to make it stay longer. In the beginning it won't feel comfortable to use force because the mind isn't used to it, but after a while it will get used to it. It's like training a dog, in the beginning they'll be a little agitated because they aren't use to the training, but if you are firm and gentle with them, they'll get used to it. If you are firm it helps the mind, and because you are gentle it won't be frightened. It takes time, but eventually the mind will be less distracted, and some months later you will definitely have a calmer mind. It is important not to expect that after one sitting everything is fixed - it takes time. Think of training your mind as training a very wild, crazy horse. Some horses will be so wild it will be very hard to tame, but you won't find a horse you cannot tame, no matter how energetic - it takes time. The same with our mind, no matter how wild, if you practice in the right way, it is possible to have a very calm mind. We often think that our mind is so unfocused and distracted that we want to give up, but we must think that no matter how distracted or wild the mind is, if we follow the instructions it is possible to tame and subdue the mind.

Reasons why the mind is wandering:

For example thinking about your job, family, interests; all the samsaric things are taking away your mind. When this happens we remember that the samsara that we find attractive is not the cause of happiness and peace. Think about how many times we utilise these distractions and how little pleasure we get out of it, and how much unhappiness we get out of it. We constantly use Dharma to learn about the material disadvantages, use your own past experience of what you went through or are going through. If you use all these tools you will find these things less attractive. When you are less attracted, naturally your mind is going to run towards them less, and the mind finds it much easier to focus. Also to remember that this life is impermanent. We don't know how long we are going to live, so this wandering mind leads us to negative thoughts, which will then lead to negative karma, bringing more suffering in this and future lives. We think about the reality, not to frighten us, but to make us less interested in the out there, and easier to bring the mind back.

Losing Interest:

Another problem is when we lose interest, then dullness and the sleepy mind comes in. At this time you need to inspire yourself. Think about the qualities of the Buddha's the quality of wisdom, all that we can achieve in this life through Dharma: all great results achieved by Dharma. So this inspires you and wakes you up. When we are watching TV and a boring show comes on we might fall asleep, but then something exciting comes on and we wake up. In this way our object is like a TV show, when you are bored you're going to fall asleep, then when you create some excitement it awakens you again.

We are constantly adjusting our mind. As you improve you extend the length of time. In the beginning you start with ten minutes. You use all these techniques and feel comfortable with the ten minutes, so next time you can do fifteen minutes. Then the more you find it enjoyable, extend to twenty minutes. In the beginning you mustn't do two hours. It needs to be short, and as you feel something of value and benefit, you can gradually extend the time. Like in business, you don't start off investing a million dollars as you've more chance of bankruptcy.. You start off small as you do well you gradually expand the business. *Transcribing from last 4 Issues by Linda*

Pilgrimage 2013 in the planning to INDIA and NEPAL with Khenpo Ngawang Dhamchoe



Khenpo Ngawang Dhamchoe will be leading a three week pilgrimage to the four holy sites in India and Nepal in **mid - November 2013**.

The cost of the pilgrimage will be approximately \$5,500.00 which will include airfares, internal transportation, accommodation and all meals.

Further details of the pilgrimage will be available in early 2013.

If you have an interest in going, please email the Centre on info.drogmi.org

Further information will be emailed to you as it becomes available...